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ABSTRACT

This reissue of the seminal 1968 study of the origins of mass popular education in 19th-century Massachusetts is considered one of the first radical revisionist interpretations of U.S. educational history. This new edition retains the original text but includes a new introduction by the author. The study looks at the relation between reformer ideology and the style of reform within the context of fundamental changes in the life conditions of Massachusetts. To approach the issues with which the study is concerned, the book focuses on three significant contemporary events: (1) the abolition of Beverly High School in 1860; (2) the attack of the American Institute of Instruction on a respected colleague, Cyrus Peirce, in 1853; and (3) criticism of the state reform school by some of the state's leading reformers. The study concludes that educational reform in the 19th century was sponsored by a coalition of educators, social and financial leaders of the state, and middle-class parents, a model that survives in modern reform efforts. (Contains four appendices: a factor analysis and relevant variables in the historical study; endnotes; an annotated bibliography; and an index.) (WFA)

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